

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"Yet I planted thee a vine of right seed; how then art thou turned into a degenerate plant?"

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me."

JEREMIAH, Chap. ii.

## TO THE READERS OF THE REGISTER; ON THE NO-POPERY BATTLE.

Barn-Elm Farm, 3d March, 1829.

MY FRIENDS,

If ever there were a time for us to enjoy ourselves, it is the present: every enemy that we have in this world, in doors or out of doors, banker, merchant, cotton-lord, lord of the anvil, borough-monger, parson, magistrate; every tax-gatherer; every creature dependent upon the thing; every old pensioned spy and informer; the Catholic aristocracy and lawyers; O'CONNELL and his calumniators crew: all, yea all, are in a twitter, and know not what the d—l is to become of them; but, above all things, the mag-rooms are in a most perilous situation: the big bullet-headed bull frogs are staring at each other in wonder, that wheat should fall in price in the month of March; and amidst the turmoil of No-Popery, even the Ministers themselves seem to forget that there are such things as "worthless rags" in the country. Hundreds of thousands are feeling the blessings of HUSKISSON'S free trade, while Huskisson himself is ready to join RYAN, REDENDALE, and ANNA BROWNE, in a project for expelling the Jesuits, though the former and the latter are for putting Catholics into both Houses of Parliament; and the two middle ones

are for shutting them out even of the office of Justice of the Peace. All are in confusion: no one knows what to say, what to do, or what to expect: only one personage keeps steadily on in a uniform course, and that is the DEBT, an old and tried and faithful friend.

After congratulating you, my friends, upon this delightful state of things, and pointing out as a subject of joy that this state of things has been produced; or, at least, that the mess has been thickened by the very man whom the borough-mongers used to thrust up under our noses and ask us if we did not smell death there; I shall proceed to address you upon three or four topics connected with the question just now coming before the Parliament: first, on the rejection of PEELE at OXFORD: second, on the practicability of O'CONNELL'S threat relative to the bank-notes: third, on the facility which the Catholics will have of putting members into the HOUSE OF COMMONS: fourth, on the rumours which are afloat relative to the disposition of the KING with regard to this Catholic project.

FIRST, with regard to the rejection of PEELE at Oxford; and never was there an occurrence more pleasing to me than this. This man was the author of the celebrated BILL for causing cash-payments; he is the son of a man who subscribed 10,000*l.* voluntarily for a war to put down jacobins and levellers; he was a mere manufacturer, and he was made a BARONET by PITT, after his subscribing this 10,000*l.*; his baronetage tells us, that he had a presentiment that he should be the founder of a great family; he told the HOUSE OF COMMONS, that when this son was a child, he presented him to a society of his friends, and, as it were, consecrated him to be the follower and imitator of PITT; the son has been presumptuous beyond the presumption of all other men that I ever knew; he was an orangeman, and he was chosen by the University of Oxford because he was regarded as immoveably

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fixed in his hostility to all concessions to the Catholics. He has now, without any reason assigned, all at once turned about; tacked as suddenly as the wind in the month of April, blowing as stiffly from the north as he did before from the south; and lastly, he has been cheered to the skies by the despicable faction at BROOKES'S, who praise him *because* he has thus tacked about.

Why, my Friends, I am glad that he has tacked about: I am glad that he is to be an instrument in the hands of a just God, to cause the Catholics to be restored to the plenitude of their rights; but I am also glad that he has been thus scornfully rejected by the University of Oxford, not only as a suitable punishment for his abandonment of principle, but because it will be a warning to others how they are guilty of such abandonment. I am pleased at it too, because it thickens the mess; because it renders the path of the Ministry and the Whigs more thorny; because it increases the uncertainty in which the parties now are; because it adds to the turmoil; and because it gives us another chance of obtaining a reform and equitable adjustment.

The circumstances of this rejection of PEEL are of great interest and importance, and must be attended with commensurate consequences. Let us see how the matter stands. He was one of the members for the University of Oxford, always deemed the very highest station of a Parliament man. Having turned right-about as to the Catholic Question, he resigned his seat for the University in order to give the members of that body a fair opportunity of rescinding their former vote in his favour, if they disapproved of his change of conduct. An election, therefore, has taken place in the University, and he has been rejected by that University, who have chosen his opponent, SIR ROBERT INGLES, by a very considerable majority; and for fear that this accident should happen, a seat has been provided by this son of *presentiment* for a place called WESTBURY in WILTSHIRE, where the voters are a few persons, and the occupants of burgage tenures; so that

from the very highest station as a member of Parliament, this lofty son of *presentiment* has neatly and quietly slipped into one of the very lowest of all.

But we must view this matter as a *measure of the Government*. PEEL would not have resigned his seat, had he not been confident that he should be re-elected. Nay, the Duke would not have permitted him to do it, if he had not deemed his re-election *quite certain*. If PEEL had had a mind to retain his seat, the University could not have turned him out of it; and as to the opinions of the electors, the Government, with all its weight and all its patronage, would easily have found means to have drawn from numerous members of the University declarations to be printed in the newspapers, that the University was *quite satisfied with his conduct*; and that only a few prejudiced old men disapproved of that conduct. We saw a specimen of this in the published letter of Dr. PHILPOTTS. There would have been letters on the other side, no doubt; but the weight of the Government, and the *cheapness* of printing, which the partizans of PEEL would have experienced, would have given his friends the best of the controversy as to the opinions of the University; or, at the very least, the matter would have been rendered doubtful, and the voice of the University would have become *nothing* in the dispute. But the DUKE and PEEL, relying upon the weight which patronage and expectancy would have, wished for the voice of the University to be *something* in the dispute: wished it to be *positive* on their side; wished not to have merely to say, that the University is for the greater part for us; but wished to come into Parliament with a *vote* of the University on the side of emancipation; and if they had had that vote to produce, a vote from that body which is more interested than any other in the question, the question would have been settled at once: fifty thousand petitions against their measure would not have been sufficient to counteract this one single *vote*. Therefore, he vacated his seat, and therefore the election took place.

The cackling WHIGS, and their nauseous newspapers, ascribed this signal defeat to the country parsons, and the gentlemen living constantly in the University; men without the "*vortex of liberal opinions*." Greatly and everlastingly to the honour of these men, this is the truth. I was determined, until the election should be over, not publicly to state any opinion upon the subject; but I could bring twenty gentlemen to witness that, from the first, I said that PEEL would fail. This was not only my opinion, but it was also my wish; because, though I wished, and still wish, the DUKE to carry his measure, and though I wished to see my old foes, the parsons, humbled, I could not bring myself to wish that they should commit an act so infamous as this act of re-electing Peel would have been. I am something of a scholar myself; my sons are scholars; books and literature have been my delight: I honour learning, and it where I will. I am, too, acquainted with many clergymen of the Church of England. I was born and bred in this church, after all; and I could not bring my heart to entertain the wish, that this body of learned men should mix on themselves, and on their country, a reality, the mark of infamy so dark and so indelible as that which they would have imprinted by the re-election of this man.

When we consider all the circumstances of the case, nothing was ever more honourable than the conduct of the University upon this occasion. There was the whole power of the Government exerted upon this occasion; there were all its numerous, and almost all its innumerable, temptations tendered to the members of this University. CHURCH, LAW, ARMY, NAVY, CIVIL LIST, Generalships, Admiralships, Commissionerships, and endless offices for lawyers; rich livings, pluralities, prebendaries, deaneries, nay, bishopricks, and sinecures, and pensions, innumerable: all these were displayed before the voters, and yet a great majority reject them all, rather than give their sanction, rather than not express their disapprobation, a political apostacy so flagrant.

The WHIG newspapers, together with the nasty OLD TIMES, tell the public that all the *enlightened* men of the University voted for PEEL; that all the London voters were for the consistent son of *Presentiment*; and the Morning Chronicle dwells with delight upon the circumstance, that Mr. PEEL's enemies consisted chiefly of "*Country Parsons*," and that that gentleman had all the *men of the world* for him! Yes, all the men of the town: it was a pity for him that the women of the town could not vote too; for he must have had, to a certainty, *their* voice, as that of one woman. To have been chosen by the quiet, country parsons; to have been chosen by these men, is the greatest possible honour to SIR ROBERT INGLIS, except the notoriety of the fact, that those who voted against him were a set of tax-eaters, or would-be tax-eaters, and being, at the same time, other things, the nature and degree of which it is not necessary for me to describe.

Now, as to the consequences of this failure of PEEL, they must be great: the question assumes a new aspect the moment we hear of his rejection; the King has now heard, not a *petition* from that University, which he has never before seen opposed to the Government; but he has heard a *vote* from that University; that University has now told him, that the measure which they have heard described, and that every measure of the sort, they deem contrary to the Constitution of Church and State. The KING now sees his leading Minister in the HOUSE OF COMMONS, who is about to propose this great measure, a representative of the burgage-tenures of WESTBURY, and not of his always and devoted University: and who is to say what effect this may have upon the mind of the KING? It is very probable that the King may have given his consent conditionally: it is still more probable that he may have been told, that PEEL would have been re-elected for the University; and when he finds, as he has now found, that this was not true, he could blame the KING, if he were to withdraw any consent from the measure which he might have given. Besides,

decision of the University will and must have great effect with many persons of great weight in both Houses of Parliament. If it convert no one, it will confirm many that were wavering; and, with regard to the *people*, it is a proclamation next to one coming from royal authority, that the measure proposed is one that has a tendency to destroy the Protestant Constitution of the kingdom. So that the Ministry, in making this resignation of PEEL a Government measure, played what the French call "*gros jeu*," and what we call a desperate game. They thought they did not; they thought they were sure to win; for, upon any other presumption, the resignation of Peel was a thing little short of madness.

Mark, too, the disingenuousness of this proceeding on the part of PEEL and the Government. The puling MORNING CHRONICLE complains that the Members of the University made it simply a question of Popery or No-Popery. To be sure! what else was it? Was not this the question with the Government? And would not the University have given in the plainest manner its assent to the measure, if it had re-elected PEEL? And that too, observe, without knowing how extensive the measure would be; and here we see the unfairness, the disingenuousness of PEEL, of the proceeding on the part of PEEL and the Government. For, what do they do? They *studiously avoid telling the University or any body else, of what nature and extent the measure is to be*. Next, the time given for preparing for the election is as short as possible. The newspaper advocates of PEEL tell us that his chief reliance was upon the enlightened *men of the town*, who might be popped off to Oxford in eight hours. PEEL knew this as well as his advocates, and the Government knew it too, while they also knew that his opponents were scattered over the whole kingdom, from Penzance to Dover, and from Battle, in Sussex, to Berwick-upon-Tweed. They knew also, that innumerable of these country clergymen could not afford the expense of the journey; could not, in many instances, quit

their churches for the time necessary to go and vote; and that, in numerous other instances, the advanced age and infirmities of the parties, must of necessity keep them at a distance from that scene to which the *men of the town* would flock at full cry, like a kennel of well fleshed hounds; so that, when we take a full view of this matter, we must come to the conclusion, that never was defeat so disgraceful as that of *Peel*; and that never was opinion expressed in a manner more decided than that expressed against him, or more honourable to the parties who expressed it. He had chosen the time for his vacating his seat; he had known his intention before he had resolved upon vacating; he had all the time to canvass, and to promise before he had declared his intention; he disguised even from his own supporters the nature and extent of the measure about to be proposed; he took every advantage that it was possible for him to take of his constituents, who had so highly honoured, and who had so implicitly trusted in him; and yet the result was that which we have beheld in spite of a mass of temptation so strong, as hardly ever to have had its equal in the world. The honourable conduct of the men who have voted against PEEL, is not to be duly estimated until we reflect that it is the practice of the University to make a record of the names of the parties who vote, and on the side and for the persons for whom they vote. Every man, who has voted against PEEL, knows well that this record will be in the hands of the Government; and before he gave his vote, he knew well the consequences not only to himself, but to his sons in many cases, and to some connexion or other in almost every case. Therefore, though I anxiously wish success to the Catholics; though I think them unjustly excluded from power, I cannot as an *Englishman* but rejoice that so much virtue has been found amongst the learned men of my country.

And now, how is the RIGHT HONOURABLE subject of the eulogy of Brookfield to make his appearance in the House? Rejected by the University of Oxford, rejected by every free and virtuous man

of that great body of learned men : cast off by those, whose suffrages before swelled him with pride ; and, on the very spot where he stood their representative a fortnight ago, standing honoured with the suffrages obtained by the patronage of Sir MANASSEH LOPEZ, at the celebrated, the far-famed hole called WESTBURY ; while Sir ROBERT INGLIS stands before him too, and looks him hard in the face. Yet, this sight and these thoughts the RIGHT HONOURABLE ROBERT might support ; this "*sacrifice*" he might be expected to make in addition to all the rest : Sir ROBERT'S hard look, and the pity and the evidently suppressed sneers of his former friends, the Member for WESTBURY might, perhaps, be expected to bear : but, O God ! the *cheers of the WHIGS* ! Doctor Heylyn in his History of the Reformation, tells us that a French gentleman, MONSIEUR DE CORDES, who lived in the reign of Louis the eleventh, used to say, that he would be content to lie seven years in hell, upon condition that Calais was regained from the English. Now-a-days, men are not made of such burning stuff ; but where is there a man of spirit, who would not, if he could, die ten thousand deaths, rather than suffer the degradation of those horrible cheers !

And as if all this were not enough, there is the gold box, price one hundred guineas (it should have been just *thirty* guineas), voted him by the WAITHMANS, the GALLOWAYS, and the rest of that set, who now fill the very posts formerly filled by the men who took the lead in cashiering a KING, because that KING wished to give to Catholics those very powers which this PEEL now wishes to give them. To make the scene complete, there only requires that he take his seat with this box in his hand, and let some one just observe that this box has been voted by men, who can afford to vote only a hundred pounds a year for the widows of all the poor men of the city ; voted by men, who got, only the day before they voted the box, 400,000*l.* I believe it was, out of the taxes on loan, to finish the building of that bridge, which ought to be built out of the revenues of the City ; but which revenues

are all mortgaged, all anticipated by loans, and all liable to the payment of dividends, in the shape of bonds. These short facts stated, let him twirl about his gold box, and produce it as an answer to the decided and solemn rejection of the University of OXFORD.

I have now done with PEEL and his attempt upon the University ; except that I have to repeat my conviction that his rejection must, if the King be fairly treated, produce a great effect upon his mind and conduct, to which I will add an expression of my fears that it will, co-operating with other causes, tend to defeat the measure of the Duke and to produce his overthrow. MAJOR CARTWRIGHT said, upon the trial of TOOKE and HARDY, that he would accept of the aid of the vilest of persons in effecting a Parliamentary Reform, upon the same principle that convicts were employed to fight the enemy in the army and navy. This was right enough, if he could obtain the aid without doing any thing *villanous himself* ; but if he could not obtain that aid without praising the convicts, then to obtain it dishonoured himself and his cause, and rendered him unworthy of success. I would have taken PEEL'S *silent* vote in favour of the *Catholics* : I would have heard his shuffling excuses, and would have said nothing ; but, if I could not have his aid, if I could not have success, without eulogising his conduct, without calling him a patriot, without uttering one little word or two in excuse for him, let the cause go to the d—l : let it be defeated for the present at any rate ; for to praise this man, with a view of securing his aid, is practically to avow the hideous and blasphemous doctrine that the *end sanctifies the means*.

The SECOND topic on which I propose to touch is, my friends, of deep interest to us ; namely, the *practicability* of O'CONNELL'S threat with regard to bank notes. The newspapers, which are opposed to the Catholic measure, affect to regard this threat as mere *wind* ; as mere empty bluster. Such I believe it would be ; for I do not believe that O'CONNELL is sincere with regard to the matter ; but I am certain that if he were sincere,

and if he were to exert all the influence which he possesses, to execute the threat is perfectly practicable. It is said, that he cannot get any large part of the people to take paper-money, but he can get them to take *gold*: and what is so easy as for the exasperated Catholics of Ireland, to club their efforts, and to get together a hundred thousand pounds in the paper of the bank. That hundred thousand pounds demanded in gold, is, without the smallest difficulty in the world, exchanged, in a day or two, for another hundred thousand pounds in paper; and thus, in a very short time, the bank is drained. In Ireland people seldom see a sovereign or a bit of gold in the country; and the notes of the bank of Ireland are payable nowhere but in DUBLIN; so that a gold bank opened at CORK, another at WATERFORD, and so on, would collect in the paper at a prodigious rate; and would, in fact, have all the effects which have ever been anticipated from a general run upon the banks.

Consider, my friends, what a state of exasperation the Irish Catholics would be in, if this measure were now to be rejected; if this cup were now to be dashed from their lips. You have been hot and thirsty in summer; you have had a full mug approaching your mouth; and if you have ever had it suddenly knocked away from your parched lips, and seen it sucked up by the earth, you may have some faint idea of what the feelings of the Irish Catholics may be, if this measure be now rejected; and especially *after the dissolution of the Catholic Association*; especially after the passing of an Act *against the Irish Catholic Association*, which even its partizans, and, indeed, both sides of the House, frankly avow to be a partial abrogation of the Constitution! Mark the progress of this Bill. The Ministers very justly stated it to be a most desperate remedy applied to a most desperate disease. But, at the same time that they propose this desperate remedy, they solemnly pledge themselves to the measure of the relief which was to follow; and the Whigs expressly declared that they gave their consent to the desperate remedy

only because they looked upon the *measure of relief as already carried*, which were particularly the words of BROUGHAM. Upon this assurance, together with the more solemn assurance coming from the lips of the Ministers, and a like assurance implied in the Speech of the KING, the Catholic Association (very foolishly, however) dissolved itself, though I maintain that in every thing, except in as far as it dealt in a sort of *understood* threat to persons not subscribing, it was an assembly perfectly legal. And here let me stop for a moment to notice that LORD REDSDALE particularly has denounced the Association as illegal, and that, as such, it ought to have been put down by the law authorities in Dublin. His lordship forgets, perhaps, that when he was Solicitor General, and the present LORD ELDON Attorney General, there was an Association which, in the year 1793 or 1794, and succeeding years, held its sitting at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand; that it raised money by voluntary contributions; that it held debates; that it employed its funds in the payment of emissaries, and of the press; that it issued innumerable publications, which it circulated in every part of the country; that it offered rewards, by public advertisement, to those who would give information relative to the conduct of persons opposed to its cause; that it had one newspaper established by itself, and employed for its purposes; and that so far from having been suppressed by the law, it was eulogized by the members of the government, and the leaders in it were all highly rewarded. "Aye," my LORD REDSDALE will say, "but that was a loyal Association, *against republicans and levellers*." Very true, but it was just as *LEGAL* as the Catholic Association in Dublin, and not more legal.

And now to return; let any man, that has a heart within him, judge, if he can, of the heat of the blood that will be occasioned by the suppression of this Association, if the soothing measure be finally rejected. As to the capacity of the Catholics of making a run upon the bank, there are men to say, that all the great

proprietors of Ireland are Protestants: they are, as far as relates to landed possessions, though even this is not true to the extent that is pretended; for there are, perhaps, as many Catholic landowners as there are Protestants, though, in the aggregate, they are greatly inferior to the former. But this is a question, not of house and land, but of ready money; and here the Catholics are, at least, five or six times as strong as the Protestants; and, as to the Catholics being fundholders, and having an interest in the support of the paper system, many, doubtless, are of that description; but none of the *priests* are of that description; and their power, fortunately for truth and justice, is paramount amongst their flocks. Judge, then, of the consequences of disappointment now. If PEEL can *sacrifice* even reputation for the good of his country, will not a Catholic make a little sacrifice, for the sake of obtaining revenge, for injuries such as will now be inflicted upon him, if the DUKE should be thwarted in his laudable wishes and intentions?

Great numbers of the Catholics have long been convinced that they never will be restored to their rights as long as the paper system shall exist. They see, in the breaking up of that system, the only chance of such restoration; at least this was their view of the matter until this unexpected movement of the DUKE of WELLINGTON in their favour. Let the DUKE's intention be defeated; let them see, not good grounds for their former opinion, but the perfect certainty of its correctness; then take into view the power of the priests, and the unity of will of the Catholics, and doubt, if you can, their activity in effecting the destruction of that paper system; let, in short, their motives to action, and their power to act, be duly considered, and then doubt, if you can, their capacity to give effect to the threat of O'CONNELL, that this measure of the Duke should be totally rejected.

But, do people consider that this is an affair of *money*, and that money is not equally precious in the eyes of a Protestant as those of a Catholic? The Protestants may detest and abhor any

attempt to execute this threat, but if *they have notes, they will carry them to the bank*. There is no principle, there is no hatred, there is no love, the force of which is to be put into competition with self-preservation; and if a run were to take place, or even to be generally suspected, or expected, Protestants, as well as Catholics, would rush to the bank. Men, under such circumstances, think about nothing but their own safety. There is no law to prevent a Catholic from going to the bank with a four-bushel sack full of its notes, and having a cart, surrounded by a dozen stout fellows, to take away the gold: there is no impediment of any sort to this; and this one act would do the job completely; Catholics, Church people, Presbyterians, Methodists, mongrels, "new-reformation people," would all rush to the bank instantly; and then there would be something else to do besides crying no popery. Now there is nothing in the world to prevent O'CONNELL from doing this thing, while he, and every Catholic in Ireland, will have a powerful motive for doing it, having (if the measure should be rejected) now obtained the certainty that emancipation can never be accomplished as long as the paper system shall exist.

If I be asked *why this thing has never been done before?* My answer is, that O'CONNELL and the Catholics never had before a motive sufficiently strong for doing it. They have hoped, until now, to accomplish their object without the destruction of the paper system. They must now see that they never can accomplish it without such destruction; at least, they must see it the moment that this measure is rejected. If I be asked, as I reasonably may, why then I wish the measure not to be rejected since I am so anxious to see paper-money so completely abolished, my answer is, that I wish to see the system destroy itself; and to see the thing accomplished peaceably, and not in the midst of a strife about religion.

I know that I shall be told, that there are the means of complete protection against this act of hostility on the part of the Catholics; for that the bank can be

restrained, and that then the Catholic runs may be set at defiance; but, my Friends, remember the PUFF OUT! I have never doubted that it was my description of the *puff out*; the easy practicability of it; and the dreadful consequences of it, that produced the celebrated Bill of apostate PEELE of 1819. I proved as clearly as day-light, that, with an expense of a very few thousand pounds, bank-notes might be sowed about the streets of London, or Glasgow, or Dublin, or anywhere else, and that it would be utterly impossible to carry on the system for one week after such sowing had commented. In order to satisfy myself perfectly upon the subject, I wrote from NEW YORK to a man at PHILADELPHIA to inquire what he would charge *per hundred* for making *inimitable* bank-notes, having imprinted upon them, however, that they were not real bank-notes. He told me that he would do it for *ten dollars a hundred notes*; and this man had successfully imitated, that is to say, forged, and actually had received the money for them at the bank of the United States, notes in imitation of the inimitable notes of PERKINS and Co., who were soon afterwards sent for to make inimitable notes here; and we all recollect the appointment of the Royal Commission, consisting of DAVIES GIDDY and others, who were years at work to discover, and at work in vain, for the means of making an inimitable note. The Government at last gave the thing up; and as the means, and the only means of security against a puff out, resorted to payments in *gold on demand*.

Therefore, though I can easily conceive that O'CONNELL's threats, or any attempt to put them into execution, might be answered at once by Bank restriction, yet a PUFF OUT is not to be so answered. Bank restriction would fill the country with *assignats*; would cause two prices in the market; would produce universal confusion in a year or two; would be disgrace everlasting to the Government; and would equally serve the ends of the Catholics; for if the system came to a violent death in this way, nobody would have time to think of the "*Protestant Establishment*

*in Church and State.*" But, if the Catholics were *impatient*; if they thirsted for signal and swift revenge, they might PUFF the thing out in three months. The United States of America, are full of zealous Irishmen, and descendants of Irishmen; full of people with money in their pockets, that would be willing to lie in purgatory for some years in order to obtain revenge on the Orangemen of Ireland. A messenger from the Catholics of Ireland would send over cargo after cargo of notes; exposing nobody to danger, and fabricating them in America just as openly as men fabricate shoes. It would be utterly impossible to prevent their safe arrival in Ireland and in England. Half the money which O'CONNELL must have expended at BARR's the other day, would inundate the country, without the possibility of its being prevented, even by a law to ransack every vessel, and every bale, box and barrel, in every vessel coming from America. This is so certain; it is so clearly traced, that no man can doubt of the fact. It is felony to have a forged bank-note in our possession knowing it to be forged. There are no other means known than the voluntary confession of the accused, to convict any man, in this case, of the offence. The act of fabrication would be no crime, because it would be done in the United States; the *shipment* of the goods would, for the same reason, be no crime; the receiving of the goods would be no crime; and the having of them in possession no crime, unless it could be proved that the party knew that the goods were in the package before he took the package into his possession; and, unsuspected by every one, how easy would be the *sowing*; and, my God! how instantaneous and decisive the effect. Sir JAMES M'INTOSH, during the discussion on Six Acts, in 1819, expressed a wish to have a law passed to punish (as a *felon* I think it was) any one who should *urge any other one or any number of persons to commit felony*! "Thank you, Sir JAMMY," said I, at the time, but the *d—l* is in me if I urge people to commit felony: I only state that which I know may be done with the greatest facility; and I never did urge

any body to do this thing, and never intended to do it myself; but I don't say that I should have been sorry if it had been done, since I am sure that the paper-money is the great bane of the people of England, and a source of constant danger to the laws and to the throne. If I could have done it; I, who had no means of having an agent here, who had very scanty means of payment of the articles, who had no means of shipping goods, containing the precious commodities; if I could have done it without scarcely a man in the world that I could trust, what could not O'CONNELL and the Catholics do? With all the means which they possess, and with means ready to be poured upon them in any moment from the United States and other countries in America! France would not do: there is a police, and passports, and spies, and a government of the *regular* order. Holland and Flanders are still worse. No, no, America is the country where the manufacture may be carried on in hot weather in any barn amidst the laughter of the whole neighbourhood. I repeat that this thing might be done at any time, with the greatest facility; but that I hope that while I put the Government on its guard against this dernier resort of just resentment, all stimulus will be taken away by that gracious act which my brother soldier is about to introduce.

In one respect, however, I must confess that I differ widely in opinion with this noble brother soldier of mine. I have before remarked on the strange assertion made by PEEL, and repeated by LORDS HOLLAND and GREY, that the intended measure would have the effect of strengthening all the Protestant interests, and particularly those of the Protestant Established Church. I have combated this notion before; and I am today not a little surprised to find from the report of the debate of last night (Monday), that the noble Soldier has openly declared himself to the same amount. I take the report from the MORNING CHRONICLE, which, with ANNA BRODIE'S Paper now appear to be the great props of that Minister, and of that Prime Minister espe-

cially whom they so abused and ridiculed only just thirteen months ago, and whom they accused of an intention to govern literally by the Sword. The passage to which I allude is as follows: "He (the Duke of Wellington) contended that the *Protestant establishment would be confirmed in its strength, and secured in the possession of its rights by cession to the Catholics, and that the effect of the course the Government was about to pursue, would be to put down and to prevent the growth of Popery altogether.* (Hear, hear, hear!) This he engaged to prove to the satisfaction of that House, and of the country, if not even to the satisfaction of the Right Reverend Prelate himself, whenever the Bill from the other House came before their Lordships for discussion. (Hear, hear!) He agreed most fully with the Right Reverend Prelate in his declaration upon the subject of the loyalty of the people of England, and the strength of their religious sentiments. To say the truth, he rejoiced most cordially with the Right Rev. Prelate in the number of Petitions they had presented, while they are *labouring under the apprehensions*—apprehensions which he was sorry to say had been *suggested to them*; (hear!)—with regard to the intentions of his Majesty's Ministers on this subject; when it was suggested to the people that Ministers entertained an intention to adopt that course which must *introduce Popery* into this country to the prejudice of the Established Church, then, he repeated, he rejoiced to see the people petition, and freely and fairly express their opinions; but when it was found the Government *had no such intention*, but that, *on the contrary*, the object was *to secure the Ascendancy of Protestantism*, and to relieve Ireland from the evils which oppressed it, he was confident the people would ultimately declare their satisfaction with that course, and that in the mean time they would conduct themselves with that loyalty, temperance, patience, and wisdom, which characterised them as a nation, although the measures which were in contemplation, *might not be at the present moment*

"*perfectly in accordance with their feelings.* (Hear, hear!) The Noble Duke concluded by declaring, that as long as the people were led to believe the Government had an intention to give a predominance to Popery, it was not extraordinary they should petition; but he was satisfied they would *find the terms of the measure, when they were disclosed*, prove most fully they had no such intention."

LORD ELDON characterised the DUKE's letter to DOCTOR CURTIS as being neither English nor Irish. What the above may be, I must leave the reader to determine. But if the measure be intended to secure the Protestant establishment in Church and State, to add to its strength, and to preserve it in the possession of its rights; and further, if it be manifestly calculated to put down and to prevent the growth of popery altogether, in God's name, *why was not the measure explained before?* Why, except for the mere pleasure, the mere sport of setting people to petitioning, why was it not explained. The DUKE likes to see the people petitioning, "while they are labouring under apprehensions"; but why did he suffer them to labour under apprehensions, when he might have removed the apprehensions in a moment, and even prevented their existence, by showing, that his measure was calculated "to put down and to prevent the growth of Popery altogether." My noble brother soldier says, that "he will engage to prove, to the satisfaction of the House, that his Bill will have this effect." Why not explain then before? Why not tell us, or rather tell the Lords, what the Bill was to do to put down Popery? He has been asked, (very civilly to be sure), to describe the nature and tendency of his Bill, but he has always rejected the request, and he rejects it even now. This is the strangest mode of proceeding in the world; but, it will lead many persons to suspect, that the Bill NOW intended to be introduced is a very different thing from the BILL THAT WAS INTENDED AT FIRST. And lead them to suspect further, that the great and stubborn disinclination to state the nature and ten-

dency of the Bill, arose from a desire to see *how the people would take any Bill*, and how far the Government might venture to go, without being exposed to a furious defeat! Is any man foolish enough not to perceive, that this must have been the case. The noble brother soldier, not only refused to describe the nature and tendency of the Bill which he intended to introduce; but refused to tell the Lords when and in which House he would bring the Bill forward. Now, however, he begins, if I may believe this report, to *beat the retreat*, and to *parley* a bit, now that petitions are pouring in from millions, and that the University of Oxford have sent back to the King his head Minister in the House of Commons, with credentials from WESTBURY, and with Waithman and Co.'s gold box in his hand; NOW, my brother soldier condescends to *parley*; to hoist his flag of truce, and to tell his opponents that his measure will "put down and prevent the growth of Popery altogether," and secure "the ascendancy of the Protestant Church for ever!"

This, then, must certainly be a most wonderful measure. It is to *conciliate* the Catholics; it is to *restore peace and tranquillity* to Ireland; it is to *unite* the whole empire in one heart and in one mind; it is to *remove Catholic disabilities*; and it already has, upon the solemn word of Mr. BROUGHAM, induced the Catholic Association of Ireland to dissolve itself; it is to make seven millions of Catholics unite in cordial love with the Protestants of England; and yet (wonderful man!) it is to *put down and to prevent the growth of popery altogether!*

But, as the French preachers say, *encore un coup*: if such be the nature of the intended measure, and if such were the intentions of the ministry, *why did not poor PEELE state this to the University of Oxford?* The DUKE solemnly engages to *prove* to the satisfaction of the House and of the country, that such is the nature and tendency of the intended measure; and yet PEELE (oh, strange remissness!) neglected to produce this proof to the convocation at

Oxford, and actually suffered Sir ROBERT INGLIS to thrust him from his stool, upon the ground that the latter was for preventing the growth of popery! But, *encore un coup*: if such were the intended measure, why did PEEL vacate his seat? He must know that the measure would render him more dear than ever to the University. In short, one of three things must be: first, the measure will not tend to put down and to prevent the growth of popery altogether; or, second, *the measure is not the same* which the DUKE and PEEL intended to introduce at the commencement of the session; or, third, they must have intended, from the beginning, first, to get a Bill passed to suppress the Association, and then to hatch up and bring in a Bill which, so far from removing Catholic disabilities, would be a new insult and a new act of oppression upon that body. This last, I do not believe. One of the three must be true; and, indeed, the two first may be true; but my belief is, that since the termination of the contest at Oxford, the nature and tendency of the intended Bill have been totally changed; and, that, if the DUKE have been truly represented by the reporter, we shall now have a something which will give satisfaction to nobody; which will disappoint, and insult, and irritate the Catholics, and which will excite in Protestants ridicule and disgust, to say nothing of feelings more decidedly hostile to character.

But, *encore un coup*, I say: are Catholics not, then, to be admitted into the two Houses of Parliament? Is the Bill not to provide for this? If it be not, there is the question opened with O'CONNELL, there are all the passions and all the ambition of the Catholics to contend with; and will it have been just, will it have been decent; will it be a thing to be spoken of with patience, that the *Suppression Bill*, that notorious partial suspension of the dearest rights of the people of Ireland; will it have been just and decent, that this Bill should have been obtained from the unanimous voice of the Parliament, upon the express condition that the relief to the Catholics was immediately to follow! When that

Bill was before the two Houses, ought not the Houses to have been told that the effect of the ulterior measure "*would be to put down and to prevent the growth of Popery for ever*"? Ought not the two Houses to have been told this? On the contrary, though I allow the DUKE said nothing upon the subject, many things were said to induce every one to believe that the concessions were to be without grudging; but, above all things, the Catholics were to be freely admitted into the two Houses of Parliament.

However, the DUKE may possibly think, that admitting Catholics into the two Houses of Parliament will tend to "confirm the strength, and secure all the rights and privileges of the Protestant Church." He may possibly think this; I hardly think he can think it; but it is possible; and it is also possible that BROTHER PEEL may think the same. First, then, if I thought he had leisure for the thing, I would ask him to read the last Register: only a little bit of it, from page 276 to the middle of page 277; and I would then ask him further to consider, as the King recommends in his *Speech*, the "*whole condition of Ireland*;" and particularly the condition of the Protestant hierarchy, and how it stands with reference to the interests and passions of the Catholic people of Ireland; and, then, I would ask him, whether he can possibly believe that a Parliament partly composed of Catholics can exist for any length of time, without diminishing the strength, and taking from the rights of that hierarchy? Childish indeed are the minds of those persons who can be made to believe that only a few Catholic members can get into the House of Commons. That man must be a fool who does not perceive that, in very few instances, even in the case of boroughs, any Protestant would be extremely fond of showing his face as a candidate at an election. It is a Catholic people, stimulated by every motive in the world to have a preponderating voice in the House of Commons; that is to say, a voice at all times able to turn the scale. And very right too, I say; it ought to be so: the Catholics have been oppress-

ed long enough ; and now they ought to be relieved from every species of oppression.

PITT or BURKE, I forget which, once said, that the NABOB of ARCOT had several Members in the House. This might be false. But, I myself heard it said in the House of Commons, that the trafficking of seats was as "notorious as the sun at noon-day." Now, this being the case, is it to be believed that the Catholics, numerous as they are, and great as are the riches of the body, would not avail themselves of every available means of filling the seats in the House of Commons ? And as to the resources ; as to the mode of collecting the means, no law upon earth can prevent such collections. A Catholic Committee sitting at Bristol, or in London, if not allowed to sit in Dublin, might get together *half a million of money* for the purpose here mentioned ; and, if that were necessary, might draw the whole sum from Canada and the United States. But, all the Catholics in the *whole world* would be anxious to contribute means for such a purpose. England was called the brightest jewel in the TIARA of the POPE. It is, in spite of every thing that has been done to oppress it, unquestionably the greatest country in the world. It possesses more real wealth ; it is the land of resources of all sorts : it is the emporium of commerce and wealth ; every square mile in it has, upon an average, things in it of more value than five or six square miles of any other country ; it is full of learned men, and men of skill and genius ; it is the seat by excellence of the *Protestant Religion*, which, by its endless divisions, would have mouldered away long ago ; which never would have withstood the Catholic faith for half a century, had it not been for this great Protestant establishment, upheld by such immense wealth, and such great talent and learning. In this country, therefore, it is ; it is in this country that the Catholics see, that the Church of Rome sees its great and powerful opponent ; and, if a Frenchman would have lain in hell seven years to ensure the regaining of Calais from the English, what exertions would not the rich

part of the Catholic world make to regain, not ascendancy perhaps, but equality in England ; and equality means, the *putting down of the Protestant hierarchy* ; and how infinite are the ways in which the main body of the Protestants would soon most gladly co-operate with the Catholics in this enterprise !

Now, to accomplish this object, the natural, the ready, the easy means, is to put a good parcel of Catholics into the House of Commons. Those delightfully ripe things (ripe as a medlar), called *boroughs*, offer the channel ; a gaping channel, always ready to receive, and never surfeited with its meals. Let Catholics into Parliament, and there are no earthly means, except parliamentary reform, of preventing a Convent in Portugal from making use, and effectual use, of means here pointed out ; so that, at last, we must have parliamentary reform, in order to preserve MOTHER CHURCH against the machinations of POPERY ! This would be a curious winding-up of the story. But to this it must come, or there will be an utter impossibility of preserving the Protestant establishments of this kingdom. What ! suppose me the superior of some CONVENT, even in SIBERIA, if there be Convents there, would I not make my people live upon lentiles for a year, in order to have a hand in a traffick as notorious as noonday ! The people are now looked up to with great reverence by the boroughmongers : we hear no talk of designing and evil-minded men among the people : the sense or the nonsense, the religion or the fanaticism, of great numbers of them, has put them in motion. Men, women, boys, girls, paupers, and jail-birds, all are now treated with respect and reverence ; but, *morbleu !* if Catholics be once permitted to enter the doors of the House of Commons, the people must be admitted to the liberty of voting, as well as bawling : the power of filling the seats must be taken away from the pigsties of the bur-gage tenures, from the pot-wallopers, and from the free and independent electors of CORFE CASTLE, OLD SARUM, and GATTON : for there the seat is filled

in a minute, without any *noise*, especially while the currency is in paper!

It is impossible to look at this matter; even to take this hasty view of the natural consequences, the inevitable consequences, without coming to the conclusion, that the DUKE of WELLINGTON has been grossly misrepresented in this report of his speech; or, that he has, after all, been driven from his intention of introducing a measure which should restore to the Catholics the right of sitting in Parliament; and if he have been driven from this, then comes the question, what is it that has thus driven him?

This leads me to the last topic on which, my Friends, I intended to address you; namely, the rumours that are afloat relative to certain objections which have arisen in the mind of his Majesty the King. God forbid that I should be weak enough to believe the assertions of some of the newspapers on this score; but there does appear, from well-known facts, to be some hitch in this quarter; and one fact is, that Cabinet Councils are almost constantly sitting, while a communication from Windsor appears to be almost incessant. But another and stronger fact is, that the Royal assent has not yet been given (this is Tuesday morning) to the *terrible Suppression Bill*. That Bill once passed, will constitute a most monstrous breach of faith with the Irish people, unless it be followed by a Bill to "*remove the disabilities of the Catholics*;" and I am not a man to believe that the DUKE of WELLINGTON would be guilty of such a breach of faith. Indeed, it is something too monstrous to believe of *any* man; and I have never observed in him any thing to lead me to believe, that he could possibly be capable of such an act. Another fact is, the statement in the speech which I have just quoted, and which I find substantially the same in THE MORNING HERALD, the report of which states that the DUKE said, "that he would prove to the satisfaction of their Lordships, that the measure in place of establishing POPEERY would have the very contrary effect, and rather tend to put it down." If the Bill be really of this nature and tendency, is it possible that it can re-

move disabilities; and if this be the case, the stoppage of the Suppression Bill is no matter of surprise. The assertions of the newspapers about the scruples of the King, may all be mere party inventions; but surely the KING has as much right to change his mind as Mr. PERL. His father, as LORD HOWICK explicitly declared in the House of Commons, gave his consent to the Bill which was brought in by the Whigs in 1807; and yet, in consequence of circumstances which arose *after* the first reading of the Bill, that Bill was withdrawn, and, as was stated to the House and to the country, this was done by direction of the King. We ought to consider, that the KING sees and hears by the eyes and ears of other men; that it must be thus of necessity, from the nature of the circumstances in which he is placed. We must also well know, that neither of us would persevere to do knowingly that which was injurious to ourselves, when once we had made the discovery, that it was thus injurious. The Minister, doubtless, believed that the measure which he was about to propose would be beneficial to his master as well as to his people; but it was impossible for such a contest to be going on, with such enormous interest at stake, without numerous facts and arguments reaching the ears of the KING; and leaving the petitions on both sides wholly out of the question, is it possible for the King not to have viewed the recent election at OXFORD, and especially the result of it, and the manner of the result, as something sufficient to induce him to pause? I put this question to every man of sober thought who will take time coolly to consider what the King has at stake in this case. I dare say that it has made him pause; and we are not to be at all surprised if it has induced him to change his mind in such a way and to such an extent as may finally put a stop to the intended measure; and if this should be the case, there really will be no ground for charging the KING with caprice, unless his people be ready to allow that a Minister who changes his mind, without any reason at all, is worthy of a gold box, containing the freedom

of a city, while their Sovereign is not to change his mind, though upon the most solid reasons, and where the greatest interests are at stake.

As to the result of all this, the probability is that the *odious suppression Bill* will never be sanctioned by the KING, and that the Bill for the Catholic relief will never be passed. Though the DUKE of WELLINGTON has, I verily believe, had perfectly good and upright intentions in the matter, he has, in my opinion, been greatly deficient in skill upon this occasion. He had seen how the WHIGS were defeated in 1807, by having taking the thing upon themselves, instead of coming to the Parliament backed by a speech from the KING; and, therefore, he appears to have thought to ensure success, to smooth the way, to silence all opposition, by bringing forward the measure at the express recommendation of the KING: he appears to have thought, that every effort at resistance would fall before the immense influence and the power of the Crown. He forgot, that that was not quite all; he forgot, that the Church had a great independent power in itself; and he forgot, that that part of the Aristocracy, a specimen of the opposition of which he had already seen, possessed a power, which, when added to that of the Church, was what no minister ever yet overcame. I allow that no other course that he could have adopted would have rendered his success less dubious; but this says nothing more than that, in the present state of things, and with the present system in force, such a measure is not to be accomplished without dangers to him who proposes it, greater than any man can be expected, willingly, to hazard. If the measure be adopted, in any shape, it will certainly be such as to displease both parties; and to widen the breach, instead of causing an union of interests and of hearts.

With regard to my wishes about the matter, I most sincerely desire to see the Catholics put upon the same footing, and no other, than that of all the rest of us. I wish the church clergy to retain the churches, the parsonage-houses, and the glebes. I wish the tithes to be

abolished, or the poor to be maintained out of them, and also the churches repaired. I wish for *Catholic tithes*, in short, and I wish for the Catholics to be left quite free to fill all offices of trust and emolument, and to sit in Parliament exactly upon the footing of other men. I know that these things would be effected at once by a reformed Parliament, and peaceably effected; and I am firmly persuaded that neither these things nor any peaceable or just settlement of the Catholic Question, will ever take place without such reform. If such reform were to take place, all salutary changes would be made at once: we should be all harmonious, and all indulgent to one another: we should forget all our grievances, forgive even our bitterest persecutors, the KING's throne would be established in justice and in mercy, the nation would resume its wonted happiness, spirit and power, and we should once more be proud of the name of our country.

I am, my Friends,

Your faithful friend, and

Most obedient Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

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